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A FURTHER  
D E F E N C E  
O F  
P R I E S T C R A F T :

B E I N G  
A Practical Improvement of the SHAVER'S  
SERMON on the Expulsion of Six  
Young Gentlemen from the UNIVER-  
SITY of OXFORD, for Praying, Reading,  
and Expounding the Scriptures.

OCCASIONED BY  
A Vindication of that PIOUS ACT  
by a Member of the UNIVERSITY.

Inscribed to  
Mr. V — C — and the H — ds of H — s,  
By their humble Servant

T H E S H A V E R. *K*

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THE FIFTH EDITION.

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L O N D O N :

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 by several grossly guilty of D. D. rank,  
 a sermon has had the honor of being printed  
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 means collected on them by means of revenue and  
 capable of being used for any other than the

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A FURTHER  
 D E F E N C E  
 O F  
 PRIESTCRAFT, &c.

**H**AVING again taken my pen in hand in the name of *high* CHURCH, I must inform my readers, that my late endeavours to serve the clergy have been very acceptable to the world, and have had no small honours conferred on them by men of reverence and learning ; for I am very credibly informed, that my Sermon has had the honor of being grinned at by several ghostly guides of the D. D. rank, of more denominations than one ; for it may be observed, that some doctors, who have never a surplice to wear, have of late years been very strenuous for high church principles, and are every whit as zealous for uniformity as the clergy of ancient Babylon were, and as fond of imposing creeds and confessions as ever Sacheverel was. Well the D. D.'s of this high church

A party



party of all denominations have, it seems, found themselves aggrieved at the many-linked chain which I have given of the uniformity of religion among the clergy, from the days of Nebuchadnezzar to the days of G—— III.; and as it can never be for the interest of priestcraft that the world should know that the clergy have their honours from men, and that the doctor's diploma does not come from heaven, they were a little chagrined at the liberties which the SHAVER had taken with such a sacred and reverend order of priests; and I do not for my part blame them, for if you will gall a d— he will certainly wince.

However, I must inform my hearers, that in this day promotion of this sort among some folks cometh not from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south, and therefore it comes from the north, namely from ABERDEEN. You'll observe they do not go there to receive it, but it is generously sent to them by persons whom they never saw nor spoke with in their days, and therefore does not a little add to the dignity of the receiver.

It is thought that the Apostles would have been in much higher esteem with our dignified clergymen than they are, if their *\* birth and education had given them the rank of gentlemen*, and if they had not been *brought up in the lowest of trades* before conversion; especially if they had not contented themselves with being called by the plain names of Paul, Peter, &c. but had annexed D. D. or prefixed Rt. Rev. to their proper names. And indeed it must be owned,

\* One of the crimes of the six expelled members of Ed—a Hall.



that it would have been much more courtly and clerical in Paul to have begun his epistles thus : **HIS GRACE, THE MOST REVEREND FATHER IN GOD PAUL LORD ARCHBISHOP OF ALL THE CHURCHES, to the Saints and Faithful, &c. which are at, &c.** But he having nothing else to mind but true Christianity, which he knew could never be linked with worldly honours, contented himself with seeking the salvation of sinners, and left it to others to aggrandize themselves with *sacerdotal* TITLES.

Another part of the Apostles conduct, which it is thought has given great umbrage to some folks, is their not attempting to form any ecclesiastical establishment, which might become a state religion, so that national establishments might have been defended from the New Testament instead of human statutes and canons ; but this was left by them unattempted, to the great mortification of the high church, and to the no small advantage of the low party, who are very apt to fly to the Apostles conduct for arguments to defend low church principles.

But not to dwell upon these things, my purpose is to point out the excellencies of a late little pamphlet, intituled, *A vindication of the proceedings against the six members of E — Hall, Oxford. Inscribed to the Rev. Dr. Durell, vice-chancellor of the university, and to the worthy assessors at E — Hall, by a gentleman, member of, and sincere well-wisher to, the university. May 14th, 1768, London.* And I assure you that, from all the accounts we have had of this affair either from the Oxonians or Antioxonians, it appears to be a deed of charity to vindicate those gentlemen's proceedings, seeing common sense and religion

will be sure to act the part of remonstrants here. And I think it is no small honour to that learned body to have such an able member to vindicate their *proceedings*, and so generous as to attempt it.

Zeal for the honour of the university warmed the breast of the learned VINDICATOR in such a manner, that, being eager to serve the interests of his brethren, his errata well nigh equals the number of pages in his learned vindication, the former being *twelve* and the latter only *sixteen*; an instance rarely paralleled even by writers whose birth and education does not give them the *rank of gentlemen*, but who are *brought up to the lowest of trades*, as the rev. Vindicator observes. It was the opinion of FESTUS concerning Paul, that much learning had made him mad, and I fear if Festus had lived in our days he would have concluded that *much learning makes some people d——s*. As you know a *learned d——* and a PEDANT are names signifying the same thing. It is something of a pity, however, that this learned body had not a little corrected the press; for this is a critical age, as we Shavers observe.

But this judicious and learned Vindicator makes us ample amends for all these little inaccuracies by his sovereign contempt of the scriptures; scorning to be beholden to them for a single quotation in defence of the proceedings against those *six delinquents* who were expelled from E— Hall by the V— C— and the heads of houses; but like a man of erudition has recourse to books of more approved authenticity; namely, CORPUS STATUTORUM UNIVERSITATIS; a book better by one half suited to his purpose,

purpose, and fitter to promote the interests of the CLERGY.

From hence we may note, I. That this gentleman's opinion of the authority of scripture in such cases is sufficiently mean, and therefore he thought them not worthy of his quoting; or that he was conscious, that whatever *Corpus Statutorum Universitatis* might do, that the Bible afforded nothing that would vindicate the conduct of the Rev. V— C— and the heads of houses in this particular, and therefore could not quote it: the latter of which is thought to be the case. But although Paul and Peter, &c. in the Bible are not brought in as vouchers for the V— C—'s cause, Jack, in the Tale of the Tub, and old biting Juvenal, our pagan brother, have the honour of being introduced.

But this is not to be wondered at when we consider that the TALE OF A TUB was wrote by a rev. clergyman, and therefore was sure to have the preference to the Bible, which was written mostly, and the New Testament wholly, by laymen, to the no small grief of some fathers in black.

II. From hence we may see the disaffection of our learned Vindicator towards the compilers of the New Testament; and no wonder he is disaffected towards them, when we consider that those compilers did not study the good of the church, so as to found universities for the training of clergymen, nor provided any statutes for their safety when wiser men had established them; but shut up the canon of scripture without making any provision for the honour and dignity of the clergy of our universities. Had the scriptures been deemed a perfect rule of faith and



and practice we should have had no CREEDS, no CONFESSIONS OF FAITH, no CANONS, no CORPUS STATUTORUM UNIVERSITATIS. — How wonderful is the wisdom of the wise who can so readily perfect what the apostles left lacking!

III. This gentleman, in his very friendly vindication, has acted with more moderate pretensions than many reverend writers have done. They would persuade us that they are descended in a direct line from the Apostles; but the Vindicator does not seem to suspect that there is the least alliance betwixt them and his reverence; but joins himself with company by far more suitable for him, I mean the gentlemen lawyers who drew up the statutes of the university. And indeed we country folk wonder to see reverend, right reverend, and most reverend parsons, *whose birth and education give them the rank of gentlemen*, pretending to be descended from laymen and fishermen. But wonders never cease.

This is a long introduction, and shall for the present serve. Proceed we therefore to the Vindication itself, page 1. *To profess openly our religious principles, and to worship God in such manner as seems to us most acceptable to him, are justly esteemed a noble branch of the liberties of this country. We claim it as our birth-right, &c.* This is not to be understood of laymen, but only of the clergy; for it is well known that the laity are obliged to submit to the judgment of the clergy because of their superiority. If a layman or any other think it his duty to worship God in a manner different from the prescription of the priests, he cannot do it under pain of excommunication. Therefore this glorious privilege of thinking for ourselves is peculiar to the clergy,

clergy, else it is a non-entity. Witness the TEST ACT, the d——e of a protestant country.

Page 2. *The present subject will rest upon the right of societies to fix laws for regulation of their own members, and demand their obedience to those laws.* This is plausible reasoning; but the Vindicator, being in such a hurry to justify the university, forgot how much like a drum his argument is for emptiness; for you know if a society is merely a *civil* society its laws are to be made and executed in a dependance upon the laws of the state, and in a subserviency to the good of the common-wealth. But if a society professeth itself *Christian*, then can it make no laws without the authority of the great head of the Christian church. Therefore, for the honour of the university, and the better defence of Mr. V—C—, it were to be wished that that learned body would tell us whether they consider themselves as only a civil society, or a Christian community; and if they consider themselves as the latter, it would be very seasonable to inform us what hand JESUS CHRIST had in giving *Corpus Statutorum Universitatis*; whether, like John's baptism, it be from heaven, or, like the doctrine of the pharisees, only from men. But I fear, my friends, we are most fond of our own *home-made* laws, as being most adapted to the purposes of priestcraft.

Page 3. *This is the only criterion by which we can rightly judge of the merits of the case before us. By those statutes which they had sworn to observe they must stand or fall.* Well, Sirs, what think you? Is not this a home stroke upon the authority of the scriptures? In former times, before religion became a political engine, it was  
used.

used to be said : *To the law and to the testimony, for whosoever walketh not according to this rule it is because there is no light in them ;* but now things are much altered from what they were then, and it seems to be right priestly language to say, *TO CORPUS STATUTORUM UNIVERSITATIS, for whosoever walketh not according to this rule, exclusive of all others, shall be expelled the university.* This will account for many of our parish priests neglect of the Bible in their preaching, to the shutting of the door of knowledge upon the common people ; having at the fountain of learning been taught other rules, yea even bound by solemn oath (as the learned Vindicator says, p. 2.) to observe another rule of doctrine and manners.

*The only criterion.* There's for you. The New Testament is no criterion with Mr. Vindicator, it seems ; but still I fear the laity will think, that obedience to the New Testament is well nigh as laudible as obedience to *Corpus Statutorum* ; for they cannot be brought to give up the Bible with such willingness as some folks can.

*Ibid.* *All reasonings of the innocence of the things in themselves, which are alledged against the members lately expelled from E— Hall, have nothing to do with the subject, and only serve to beat the minds of a party.* Such an assertion as this has need of the authority of an A. M. or even D. D. before it ventures abroad, because *common sense* will be sure to find out its rottenness. It is no matter, you see, whether the things laid to the charge of the young men were innocent in themselves or not, seeing they were against the statutes. The bare supposition of  
innocence



innocence in case of a breach of the statutes, insinuates a possibility of their being in some cases different from the rule of right, which, if granted, divests *Corpus Statutorum* of all its authority to decide in any matter. Therefore the venerable Vindicator rather overshot himself in this; but we must impute that to the embarrassments he was under, as you know it is no easy matter to vindicate every act of some gentlemen, and of course some grains of allowance must be made. After all, was I to see a prisoner going to the pillory or to T——n, I should think it a query of some moment, whether he was guilty of the crimes laid to his charge, and whether these crimes in the nature of things actually deserved such a punishment.

Ibid. *It was necessary to premise, that the whole proceeding was in consequence of a regular information to the Vice Chancellor, &c.* A thing very common and easy to be obtained against people who make conscience of praying to God in a private house; for your people who do not love praying themselves, cannot endure those who do. Many instances of this might be produced from the cases of Daniel, Jesus, and his apostles, all as regular as this can be; therefore, if we have nothing better than a regular information to vindicate these proceedings, I fear much that our cause will fall into the puddle.

Well, now we come to the charge against them, according to our reverend Vindicator. And considering his near affinity with, and fervent affection for, the V—C—— and the assessors of E—— Hall, we cannot suppose that he has unjustly concealed any part of the guilt of the parties expelled.

( 1250 )  
Page 4. First, the accused members had held or frequented illicit conventicles; some not in orders had preached, expounded, and prayed extempore: that the offices of Religion were performed by people of the meanest ranks and abilities: that they met at a conventicle held in a private house within the university, where a stay-maker and a woman officiated.

This word *conventicle* was a great word about a century ago, when the clergy were blest with the *traffable* race of STUARTS. Then those people, who would pray extempore, were, like Issachar, glad to stoop down between two burdens; one imposed by the king, and another by the clergy; and the dignitaries of the church in those days like so many Balaams mounted upon the poor asses, and belaboured them, as a late ingenious writer says, with the rod of excommunication†. But since the death of that indefatigable defender of the church, the great SACHEVEREL, the word *conventicle* has lain dormant; but now it is awaked in the university, where all names of pious slander have their origin to support the old interest: though it is feared that it will not take with the populace now, as it used to do in former days, the people for these last glorious reigns of liberty having had time to clear their eyes from the dust thrown into them by former high church leaders. To the days of popery, or to the days of mungrel religion, are our universities indebted for most of their statutes, which are the *only* rules for the students conduct. No wonder therefore, that conventicles stand in them so gracefully; though it would appear not

† See a late publication, intituled, SERMONS TO ASSES.

a little strange to hear of conventicles in a land *strictly* protestant; for in such lands every loyal subject has a right to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, without being exposed to *expulsions, fines, or imprisonment*; or, on account of his religion, being held incapable of *places of honour, profit, and trust* under the government. But it is undoubtedly otherwise in nations where the clergy protest against the power of the pope, in order to arrogate that to themselves which they have taken from him. The first principle upon which the Reformation was founded, was that every man, professing to believe in the scriptures as the only rule of faith and practice, has a right to judge for himself in religious matters, without exposing himself to any punishment whatever on that account. Whether then our Vindicator and his friends at Oxford can be deemed true protestants in heart, seeing they deny that liberty to the king's subjects, I leave to be determined by some body else; and, as a benevolent lay-man, would advise the clergy, for the sake of their own reputation, to disuse the word conventicle till times wheel about to a more favourable point, for I should be sorry to see contempt poured upon the princes of our Israel.

I shall not dispute the point with the reverend Vindicator, what is deemed by *Corpus Statutorum*, &c. to be an illicit conventicle; this I shall leave to an abler hand; but would rather content myself with what common sense and protestant principles say of the case; and these deem it little less than blasphemy, to brand the worship of God, when offered in sincerity, with such names of infamy, even if the worshippers should in some things be



mistaken, notwithstanding there may be a sanction for such infamous proceedings found in some old statutes unrepealed.

Some of the greatest fathers in the church were found to frequent conventicles, and to worship God in private houses, and that without their place of meeting being certified to the bishop of the diocese. I would quote an instance or two, if I thought that so much scripture would not be offensive to the VINDICATOR. The first is in Acts ii. 49. where we find the first christians **BRAKE BREAD FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE.** That is, administered the sacrament (so called) in private houses; and if you consider the time when this was done, you'll find those houses could not all be licensed.

A second instance we have in Acts xii. 12. where many were gathered together, praying in a private house, namely in the house of Mark's mother. It may be urged indeed, that they were obliged to meet in private houses for worship in those days, because the Jewish clergy kept all the public houses or synagogues for their own use; but this is the very case at this day, clergymen who are bound on oath to preach and pray by book, as the Vindicator observes, keep all the public houses or churches for their own use; therefore, those who are inclined to preach and pray *extempore*, are obliged to do it in private houses or conventicles; and it is rather hard to hinder them so to do.

Upon the whole, it is pretty evident that there is a wide difference betwixt the sentiments of the apostles, and those of Mr. V—— C———r, and brethren; for the former frequented and preached in conventicles, and the latter expelled from the university

university for so doing. Yea, we find in the last case, that the Almighty did not disdain to hear their prayers, even though they were offered in a conventicle. But if the Most High were governed by such motives as frequently influence some men, conventicle prayers had certainly vanished into air, and would never have reached the gracious throne. But he is God, and not a c—y—n.

There is a second particular in the first charge, as I have it from the learned Vindicator, and that is, *some not in orders had preached, expounded, and prayed extempore.* This I verily believe, so far as relates to the point of *orders*; for there is but too much reason to fear, that the far greater part who do pretend to preach or expound the scriptures, do it without orders. But then it ought to be observed, that there are orders from two different quarters. 1st. There are orders from the court of heaven, which every gentleman professes to my lord bishop to be invested with ere he can obtain ordination. 2d. His lordship's orders, which, according to the original design of the institution, was to follow upon, and not precede the former. It is not difficult to prove, that many take upon them to preach without receiving orders from heaven, as appears from their backwardness to perform pastoral duties, feeding at the altar, but leaving it to others to do the office of a priest. Such gentlemen may sustain very venerable characters in life, but how they will manage it in death I pretend not to say: some people fear that they may hear the report which Abraham made to the libertine in the Gospel, which if they do it will make both their ears to tingle. Some of these indeed have not the happiness of obtaining a benefice that will

will enable them to preach by proxy, and very many are obliged to put up with a curacy, and all their days continue underlings. The many parishes, the inhabitants of which are uninstructed even in the first principles of Christianity, prove it to demonstration, that their parsons received not their orders from heaven; therefore so far I agree with the learned VINDICATOR. Further, there be many who cannot persuade themselves that my lord bishop has the authority he pretends to, supposing that the offices of an apostle and a lord b——p differ in reality, as much from one another as the practice of the latter differeth from that of the former; and therefore they do not chuse to submit to episcopal ordination, but preach without being in orders, as the Vindicator observes. But what could this be to the young men who were expelled, provided none of them preached without orders? and *their* doing so is not exprest in the charge, though I think the Vindicator might intend it to be understood of them; but this I cannot suspect from the charge itself as exhibited in the vindication, but from his after-reasoning upon it. However, it is not easy to account for the conduct of some people, especially when they have a bad cause to defend. And I, for my part, would never have dared to take a clergyman by the skirt, if I had not known the prunella to be rotten. But for the honour of the university it is to be wished, that the Vindicator had been a little more cautious, page 8, and not betrayed such weakness as is enough to make even a *barber* to blush.

Well, we shall suppose that *some* of them as the Vindicator says, or *one* of them as Dr. Oxoniensis says, had preached without orders, must it from thence



thence follow, that all must be expelled, seeing the very charge itself tacitly acknowledgeth that they were not all guilty?

But supposing they had all preached in this conventicle—what then? *Why they were then guilty of a flagrant breach of the 23d article of the church, in preaching without being in orders.* Page 8. The Article runs thus: “ *It is not lawful for any man to take upon him the office of PUBLIC PREACHING, or ministering the sacraments in the congregation, before he be lawfully called and sent to execute the same.*” This late convert to the church designs this article to prove that the six young men had broken their subscription engagements. But alas! for want of a tolerable acquaintance with the articles, he has brought it in only to shew the wretched shifts that people are obliged to fly to, to support arbitrary and oppressive proceedings. Nothing is said in the 23d article, but about *PUBLIC preaching and ministering the sacraments in the CONGREGATION*. Now if these young men actually did preach and administer the sacraments in the *PUBLIC CONGREGATION*, then were they guilty of a flagrant breach of the article; but if they did not so, how shall we account for this assertion, otherwise than by imputing it to inattention, and overheated zeal for *HIGH CHURCH*, which must at all events be supported, though it should be even at the expence of truth? But the charge itself leaves us to suppose, that this preaching and praying extempore was not performed without orders in public houses or churches, but in a conventicle or private house, namely a *staymaker's*, therefore cannot be called *public preaching in the congregation*, and consequently no breach of the 23d article. This might have passed without notice probably, if the  
words

words *public preaching* had not been printed in italics to distinguish them from the rest: what thoughtlessness was here, seeing those very words clear the six young men from the charge of breaking the 23d article! Our reverend Vindicator may assure himself, that the articles of the church will not be concerned in such a dirty affair; for they no where forbid people to meet together, and converse about the things of religion, or to exhort one another while it is called to-day, or to pray with, and for one another, &c.

But they *prayed extempore in this assembly, in breach of the 2d article in the 36th canon, which declares, That the book of Common Prayer, and of ordering of bishops, priests, and deacons, containeth in it nothing contrary to the word of God, and THAT IT MAY LAWFULLY BE SO USED; and that I myself will use the form in the said book prescribed, in public prayer, and administration of the sacraments, and NONE OTHER.*

The learned Vindicator would have us to understand, that by this canon all extempore prayer is utterly prohibited; and that these six young men, having subscribed this article, could not with a good conscience pray extempore, nor by any form whatsoever besides the book of Common Prayer. Therefore exclaims, page 9. *How men, who would seemingly affect to be thought conscientious, can, after such subscription, deviate so widely seems amazing; but to see such men, who have so deviated, held up to the public as martyrs and sufferers in the cause of religion, must strike all honest and sensible men, not only with astonishment, but with horror.* Here is a large fabric indeed. But suffer me a little to feel the pillars upon which it stands; however I should do it gently,  
for

for if I handle them roughly it will tumble down as the house of Dagon did, not much to the honour of the VINDICATOR, a gentleman whom I would not willingly offend.

But if we must take the canon in the Vindicators sense of it; and who so likely to know its true meaning as he? it would subject us to some little inconvenience. For instance, he judiciously observes, *every student at matriculation subscribes the three articles in the 36th canon, and takes the oath for observing the statutes of the university.* The second of which articles binds a man to use *no other* form of prayer but that in the book of Common Prayer. Let it be here observed, that all Companions to the Altar, all the Weeks Preparations, Whole Duties of Man, and all occasional prayers for fast days, days of thanksgiving, &c. are expressly against the second article of the canon, and therefore every officiating clergyman in the kingdom breaks the canon law, because they use other forms besides the Common Prayer. Well then, the six young gentlemen need not become melancholly for want of company. However I can tell you, that the booksellers find their account in the esteemed orthodoxy of many other forms of prayers besides the Common Prayer, and therefore we never shall get them to subscribe to this gentleman's opinion, that *none other* are to be used.

Every one takes the oath for observing the statutes of the university; the statutes of the university enjoin the strictest observance of the canons; the canons prohibit all prayer beside the use of the book of Common Prayer; the clergy do at certain times make use of prayers at *pence* a *piece* not to be found in the book of Common Prayer;



Prayer; *ergo*, the clergy break their matriculation oath in so doing, though they do it by royal authority. Ah! what has our Vindicator been doing, but fulfilling that saying of a great layman, *a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother*. For shame, sirs! that this learned gentleman should, in his zeal for the university, advance a proposition attended with consequences so unfavourable to the established church and her sons. Let me advise him before he writes another vindication, to spend a considerable time in acquainting himself with the doctrine of consequences, that he may not open one door of reproach whilst he attempts to shut another; for nobody will believe that the article referred to is to be understood in a sense which lays a clergyman under a necessity either of perjuring himself or disobeying superior powers; which must be the case, if the article not only prohibits extempore prayer, but every other form of prayer besides the book of Common Prayer, seeing certain occasions call for other forms.

Another inconvenience would attend this sense of the article; and that is, a person, thus subscribing, might find himself in such circumstances, in which no part of the book of Common Prayer might be exactly suited to his case; wherefore in this situation he must either use some other prayer, or not pray at all; to suppose the latter is inconsistent with the remotest idea of the protestant faith, and therefore the former must be admitted. A man may be in a situation where he could not have time to seek out a prayer in the legal form, nor spare his hands to hold a book: supposing for instance, he was in danger of drowning, would it be deemed a breach of the canon, if without book he should cry,

“ Save,

"*Save, Lord, I perish?*" Or, supposing a man should lose his eyes, or be cast where he could not obtain a prayer book, must he be deemed a transgressor, if in such case he should even pray extempore? It is not my business to enquire at present from whence our prayer-makers derived their authority; but would just observe, that the C——y are so exceedingly set against extempore prayer is not to be wondered at, seeing so few of them are capable of exercising themselves therein; and they know that if others were allowed to pray extempore, it must be greatly to their disgrace, as the protest *ambassadors* of CHRIST and *plenipotentiaries* of HEAVEN.

But will the right learned author of the vindication give a layman liberty a little to wipe off the dirt, which, in his hurry of thought, he hath inadvertently cast upon art. 2, canon 36, which, so far as concerns the matter in debate, I shall cite in his own words? *I myself will use the form in the said book prescribed, in PUBLIC PRAYER and ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENT, and NONE OTHER.*

Let me ask this *friendly gentleman*, what he really thinks is intended by public prayer in this article? Whether he really thinks, that conventicle prayer in private houses is intended? and if conventicle prayer in private houses is not there intended, how is it, in the name of honesty and common sense, that these six young gentlemen are guilty of a breach of that article, seeing that they are charged with no prayer, but that performed in a conventicle, in a private house, notwithstanding their very enemies were their accusers and judges? Does not the Vindicator in this display his clerical powers,

powers, and discover what he would do, if he could? This is something like swallowing a camel, a thing which some people can do much easier than others can swallow a gnat.

It would be ridiculous to suppose a member of the famous university of OXFORD *ignorant* that *public prayer* always intends that which is made in the church assemblies, and not that prayer which is offered up to God in a private meeting of christian friends; or, how should the administration of the sacraments be joined with it in the article? The subscribing of this article therefore is neither more nor less than an engagement to abide by the Common Prayer Book in every part of public worship where prayer is instituted; but with respect to personal, family, or fellowship worship, the subscriber is left at liberty by the article, though not by the clergy. I think therefore the clergy are more against extempore prayer than the articles and canons, for a very good reason before given, namely, want of c—ty for it in themselves.

I am confronted at the bottom of page 9. with an odd sort of a speech, considering by whom it was made. *But to see men, who have so deviated, held up to the public, as martyrs and sufferers in the cause of religion, and that too by a man of Mr. Whitfield's public character, &c.* A character, however, which our learned and very reverend Vindicator endeavours to daub a little with infamy; infamy! such as is thought *must strike every honest and temperate man with astonishment and* HORROR. Page 10. Vind. I cannot, however, but approve of the Vindicator's prudence in chusing to have a fling at this gentleman's character, rather than



to attempt to answer his letter to Dr. Durell, which he could not but see to be far beyond his match.

*Held forth as MARTYRS.* I confess I love to meet with a blunder now-and-then, when I read the works of learned men, because it helps to keep me, who am but a SHAVER, in countenance, when I meet with blunders in my own; but I hate to be troubled with so many as I meet with in this little performance: for this reason, I humbly beg that Mr. V—C— will not suffer any more of his Vindicators to print their performances till he himself has thoroughly perused them; as there is no trusting every gownsmen in print, and we readers cannot have while to set every thing straight, which we meet with crooked, in the course of our reading.

MARTYRS, i. e. murdered or put to death for the sake of truth. Well done, Vindicator, Pray, when or where did Mr. Whitfield hold them forth as murdered or put to death? He knows very well, that however some gownsmen might delight in such work, that for the present it is out of their power, therefore he has not once hinted it.

MARTYRS and SUFFERERS for the cause of religion. You will observe, that first they were MARTYRED, and then they SUFFERED. Some people would have supposed, that martyrdom was the *finis* of their sufferings, as in former cases, and not to precede their other sufferings.

*Sufferers* for the cause of truth they have been represented, and that justly, and the contrary does not appear as yet from this vindication. For instance, they suffered for using extempore prayer, as the Vindicator owns; ex-  
tempore

tempore prayer was used by Christ and his apostles, and therefore must be lawful; but it is thought that Christ and his Apostles would have been expelled too had they lived in this formal age.

A third thing in the first charge, page 4. seems not altogether unworthy of our notice; namely, *That the offices of religion were performed by people of the meanest ranks and abilities.* That this is true must be granted by all who have any acquaintance with the roots from whence many of the clerical slips are grown. Many a reverend parson in England is descended of parents, who could not have afforded him an education to fit him for a country shop-man, who, but for *free schools, &c.* must even have been brought up to some low mechanical business, which some of their present reverences have actually been employed in, and after such employment have taken their degrees in the university of Oxford. Instances of which I can give, if necessary. But then it must be owned, that they are such, who, I believe, never took upon them to pray extempore, either in public or private houses, the former of which are very familiar to some of them.

Touching the abilities of many preachers, I can only say, that for the honour of the clergy it were to be wished, that by their regard to the natural abilities of the candidate for orders, they would endeavour to reverse that old proverbial saying, used in the country, viz. *that if a lad is ever such a dunce, if he has good friends he will do very well for a parson.* And really it seems as if we had a recent proof of this in the vindication before us. And now I am upon this subject, I will even tell you, that the

the reason assigned by many a sensible old woman in the country, why so many clergymen do not attempt to preach frequently to their flocks, is the very thing alledged in the charge, *the meanness of their abilities*. And if the gentlemen concerned have got ever a better reason to assign, I advise them to do it; otherwise the old women will go on with their story. For my own part, when I have gone with the rest of my neighbours for *pleasure* or for *forms-sake* to church on a Sunday, I have not a little admired the courage of the parson, who could pretend to preach under the disadvantage of such *low abilities*. I instance these things to confirm the truth of the charge.

It cannot be thought that our *learned VINDICATOR* means that any of those six young gentlemen performed the offices of religion in that conventicle; for this gentleman himself tells us that it was a *stay-maker* and a *woman* who officiated there, page 4; and in page 10 he represents them as *learners of this stay-maker and old woman*. Therefore, what had they to do with this? or, with what propriety could they be expelled on account of the OLD WOMAN'S preaching?

Now if the *Vindicator* means that the *stay-maker* is a person of the lowest rank, I can tell him he had best eat his words before they come to the ears of the ladies, on whose good graces his preferment greatly depends; and they will certainly conclude with me, that a *stay-maker* is at least upon a level with a gown and cassock-maker, therefore will consider this as an insult offered to their ladyships. Or, if his reverence means that this preaching woman is of the



the meanest rank, I must tell him, that he misseth his mark ; for it is said, there are a set of ladies in Oxford, with whom many students are intimately acquainted, of a rank much inferior to hers, and of an employment very different from preaching.

Page 10. *I shall not CONDESCEND to say much about what these worthy babes of grace might learn from the pious and instructing expositions of a stay-maker and an old woman.* If his reverence refer to the arts and sciences, it is thought they could learn but little ; but if he means true religion, it is deemed not impossible for them to learn more of some old women than they could have learned of all the doctors of the U——y ; for it is pretty evident, that their studying divinity *under the direction of an old woman*, was owing to those whose place it was to have instructed them therein, being unacquainted with the subject as much as the old woman was unacquainted with the original languages. However, I must remind his reverence that the eloquent Apollos condescended to be *taught the law of the Lord more perfectly*, even by an old woman, called *Priscilla*.

*I shall not say much about what these babes of grace might learn, &c.* This is the greatest, if not the only instance of prudence which I have met with in this little vindication ; for which every person of common sense must give him due honour ; for as a royal philosopher once said, *even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted a wise* ; and it is well known that the most laudable way of concealing our ignorance of a subject is *to say nothing about it*. And if this *sincere well-wisher to the university* had invariably

riably followed this rule, he would have saved me the trouble of observing, that, in the little which he hath *condescended* to say upon this subject, he hath said considerably more than is true, as I shall shew by and by; mean while observe,

*I shall not CONDESCEND.* There is buckram for you! True priestly dignity, as different from the *lowly* conduct and commands of the *condescending* Jesus, as heaven is from hell. However, in this truly clerical greatness, the venerable Vindicator only imitates his betters, who are so swelled with worldly greatness, that they will not *condescend* to converse familiarly with the poor of the flock about death, judgment, and eternity; notwithstanding, for the sake of a good living, they are become accountable for the very souls they disdain to converse with, because their birth and fortune does not intitle them to the rank of gentlemen. The reason why the Apostles did not think themselves above the meanest of the people, I suppose might be, because their own *birth and education did not give them the rank of gentlemen*—a qualification for the university which our six young men are likewise said to be destitute of. When Christ was upon earth with his people he did not see it proper to employ gentlemen in his service, but chose his ministers out of the *lowest ranks of the people*, to perform all the offices of religion, a thing complained of in the first charge against the delinquents: but now the university having taken the management of the church into their own hands, they govern it by laws which he never had any hand in making, and impose gentlemen upon him whether he will or not.

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And indeed, though this does not at all appear requisite to the prosperity of the gospel, yet it is highly necessary to the dignity of the clergy, a thing which must have the preference with some of us.

The same page has, *we all know that it is not only at a sadler's at Oxford, but among all DENOMINATIONS OF ENTHUSIASM, that old women expound, preach, and administer the other offices of the church.*

What disadvantages, alas! we illiterate people labour under in comparison of the academicks; for I never till now heard of more denominations of enthusiasm than one, and that one has long been in no small reputation with more sorts of people than some folks are aware of. I have indeed without any advantages out of the reach of a lay-man, heard of a plurality of enthusiasts; but heretofore have understood enthusiasm as the one denomination of enthusiasm; but I rather think, that our author meant denominations of enthusiasts, only mistook the word for want of referring to Bailey's dictionary. I should like to know in his next *vindication* how many denominations of enthusiasm, or enthusiasts there are, and what their names, that I may pay my respects to the *old ladies*; their **PARSONS**. It can be no difficulty for him to inform me; for he says, that we all know that it is not only at a sadler's at Oxford, but among all denominations of enthusiasm, *that old women do preach among them, and administer the other offices of the church.* Here he must, I suppose, mean we the clergy, for should he mean all *his readers*, he is certainly beyond the line of truth, for I am one who do not know them, and I think I can point out a very reputable body of enthusiasts,



thusiasts, among whom old women, properly so called, are not suffered to preach; but all the offices of the C—— are performed by old women of the masculine gender. My friend the Vindicator has an unhappy way of speaking more than he means, and writing more than he intends to be understood. He says, that we all know that *old women do not only expound, and pray, and preach, but administer the other offices of the church.* And I observe, that as we all know this so well a few instances of it may be required to support the veracity of the vindication, which appears to be in a tottering condition. O rare Vindicator! what will you not say to serve a friend?

Being led to discuss this illustrious subject by the learned Vindicator, who is so unmannerly towards our female preachers, I shall beg leave to relate a story, the truth of which his reverence may depend upon. I was once in company with a learned clergyman at Ben. Mason's, a neighbouring farmer, who treated the parson and I with a cup of his harvest beer, when who should come in, think you, but one of these preaching old women, who soon began to scrape acquaintance with her brother in black, which utterly spoiled our conversation, for the parson and I were conversing very freely about the news, &c. but nothing would serve this female preacher but religion must be introduced. The parson did what he could, indeed, to divert the conversation into a more agreeable channel; but the old woman would have her own way, a thing not uncommon with others of that sex; in consequence of which, a dispute arose between the *he* and *she* preachers, the issue of which proved to all present, that the old woman was

by a great deal the better divine. Now to dismiss this subject, let me advise my good friend the clergyman, ere he attempts to draw his pen against a woman a second time, though the conduct of his superiors should even stand in great need of a vindication, to read with attention a learned dissertation upon old women, wrote by THOMAS GORDON, ESQ; of favoury memory with the clergy; and I dare assure him, that thereby he will learn more than he seems to have done by all the lectures he has attended at the university, and obtain a more respectable knowledge of that maternal race of fair preachers.

So much for the first charge against the six methodists. Let us now attend to the second charge.

II. *Some of them had been bred up to, and had exercised the lowest of trades, were wholly illiterate, and incapable of performing the statutable exercise of the university, and much more incapable of being qualified for orders.* Page 5. Vindication. That these are not very villainous crimes, we have the Vindicator's own judgment to testify, pag. 11. *although, these charges of themselves might not be thought sufficient grounds for expulsion, there was a very high impropriety, it must be allowed, in their first admission.* And some people will think that this charge does not need such a pen as mine to turn it away, seeing it will fall to pieces of itself, even if let alone. It pains me to see the author, composer, and exhibiter of this charge, to have acted with so little caution, as to have given the lye to the great Dr. Oxoniensis, a gentleman upon whom I have conferred some  
honours

honours already, and to whom I have promised more, as I shall shew by and by ; but now I shall attend to the charge itself.

SOME of them had been bred to, and exercised the lowest trades ; SOME of them, not ALL of them. And yet ALL of them were expelled, because SOME of them had been bred to, and exercised the lowest of trades, and this is thought to be agreeable to the statute in such case provided. Here is justice *heaped up and running over* ! The numerous readers of my excellent sermon, intitled PRIESTCRAFT DEFENDED, will remember the weighty reasons I assigned against the *blacksmiths*, the *publican*, and the *Teacher under W—y*, and why they ought to have been expelled the university ; and have only to observe now, that the Vindicator does not do cleverly in calling those the *lowest of trades*, seeing there be and have been trades as low as these. For instance, there is

1<sup>st</sup>. The trade of *tent-making*, to which the apostle Paul had been bred, and which he had exercised before he went to the university at Jerusalem ; and although the Jewish clergy were very sensible of their superiority over others, the Vice Chancellor of that university, and the assessors of that hall to which Paul belonged, and Dr. Gamaliel the learned president, never attempted to expel him on account of his having been a tent-maker, notwithstanding some of them afterwards became his persecutors, not for *tent-making* indeed, but for preaching the gospel. In this, therefore, the Jewish clergy were rather more moderate than the O—d priests.

Moreover,



Moreover, after this same Paul was become an apostle, he followed his trade of tent-making, and wrought with his own hands, rather than be burdensome to the poor believers for so much as a *tythe-pig*. *He worked with his own hands.* He was not like many who pretend to be a-kin to him, who eat the fat and drink the sweet, at the great expence of the people, and in return hardly preach once in twelve months: those are drones; but Paul was an industrious workman, both at his trade, and also in the word and doctrine; for he chose to spend and be spent in the service of the gospel: but some of his pretended kinsmen, though they have all the emoluments of the altar, are so much afraid of being spent in its service, that they content themselves with preaching by *proxy*, which you know is very gentleman-like.—But I have said, that Paul was no *gentleman*; and I add now, that he was not only a tradesman, but a *journeyman*. Not a *journeyman parson*, but a *journeyman tent-maker*; for he did work with his own hands, which master tradesmen seldom care to do, otherwise we should have fewer bankrupts than we have. But our great gownsmen neither *work* nor *preach*, and yet they are apostolic, and yet they are divinely commissioned, and yet they are descended of the Apostles, and yet there is not the least likeness between the Apostles and their reverences, and yet they have a divine right to all the profits of the church.

2d. There were fishermen; I do not say fishmongers, the lords of the finny tribes, for that is an high trade; but fishermen, which to this day continues one of the lowest of trades; and

and yet out of this class of people, it pleased the Redeemer to choose most of his Apostles ; and although we read of gentlemen commoners at the universities, yet we do not read of any gentlemen fishermen at Yarmouth, &c. The great Master of the Apostles having no kingdom in this world, and never designing his religion to become political, had no need of employing *gentlemen* to dignify his gospel, therefore chose fishermen, as most suitable to the purposes he had in view. Neither their birth, education, nor dress gave them the rank of gentlemen : all the ranks of the clergy in those days distinguished themselves from the laity by the peculiarity of their dress ; but it appears not that the dress of the Apostles differed at all from that of the meanest of the people : and yet they prayed, and yet they preached the gospel, and yet they expounded the scriptures to the great confusion of the holy trade of priestcraft. But times are altered since then ; and whatever Jesus Christ might have done in his day, the Vindicator observes, that our modern clergy will not suffer people of the *meanest ranks*, who have been bred to the *lowest trades*, to become students at the university ; for six young men were expelled, because *some* of them had *exercised the meanest trades*. In this, therefore, there is a manifest discord betwixt the Apostles and their reverences. However, this LAD, the Vindicator, was imprudent in alledging that their trades were the lowest, seeing there have been, and still are trades lower than theirs. But boyish youth, pride of learning, and hope of preferment, will make a wiser than he to speak at random.

*They*

*They were wholly illiterate, and incapable of performing the statutable exercise of the university, and much more incapable of being qualified for orders,* says Mr. Vindicator.

WHOLLY illiterate, i. e. could neither read nor write; for a person cannot be deemed wholly illiterate, if he has a competent degree of knowledge of his mother tongue; and this is a language which the learned Vindicator does not seem perfectly to understand himself. If the maxim laid down by some persons of eminence is to be regarded, "true learning does not consist in the knowledge of the languages, so much as in the knowledge of mankind," we shall find many a dunce who understands Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, who never was capable of entering into the spirit of the writers he has read, and many a learned man who never knew any language besides his mother tongue. However, our little Vindicator has the effrontery to give the lie to the great Oxoniensis, for which it is well if he himself is not in danger of expulsion.

This great man, of whose veracity it is dangerous to doubt within the precinct of the university, very gravely tells us in the *Gazetteer*, and *New Daily Advertiser*, April 8. That they *were very illiterate*. But they were *wholly so*, says the Vindicator. That they were not *wholly so* the Rev. Oxoniensis proves from his declaring that they were a *little* acquainted with the Greek. For my part I agree with his reverence, not loving to quarrel with great men, and shall leave the Vindicator to take what follows, which may perhaps teach him not to contradict his betters for the future.



future. However, was it even so as the boy would have it, that they were wholly illiterate, it is apparent from their conduct that they desired to learn. Now where in the name of wonder should a thirsty man go but to the fountain? or, where should men go who are imperfect in the languages to attain the complete knowledge of them, but to the fountain of learning, the university? I can tell our Vindicator that it is not every lad that has the advantage of being trained up in a dissenting academy, as he had, before he went to the university, notwithstanding he can *talk now so liberally of CONVENTICLES. TURN-COATS are always most violent.*

It is needless for me to attempt a further refutation of this second charge, seeing the Vindicator himself does not consider these things included in it as sufficient grounds for expulsion. I shall therefore dismiss this head, after I have just observed, that the heads of houses are very much obliged to this BOY for the friendly admonition he bestows on them. Page 12. *We may hope this instance of an admission of persons, wholly illiterate, will be a warning to the heads of houses, &c.* I confess, it does not reflect much honour upon the heads of houses to stand in need of reproof from a pert boy, whose beard has not strength to resist the shaver's razor. It is hoped, therefore, they will submit to the instruction of the gentleman commoner, AGED NINETEEN. And I pass on to the

III. Charge against the six young men expelled. I confess it is an heavy charge, which, *if true*, they ought to be expelled from all  
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Christian society ; for it is no less than *that they* *be'd the doctrines of METHODISM, viz. That* *faith without works is sufficient to salvation:—* *that there is no necessity of good works:—that the* *immediate influence of the spirit is to be waited* *for:—that once a child of God, and always a* *child of God. These, I presume, make no part of* *the doctrines of the church of England.* It is something unlucky for our Vindicator, that the doctrine of the Methodists is so well known, that the greatest part of his *few readers* will consider this as a fib ; but who would not fib for the good of the cause ? And who that has *a penny to catch* would not be upon the side of the strongest party, and bait piety under the name of phrenzy, like the hungry authors of many a performance ? But let us a little enquire into the truth of this charge, as made by the Vindicator.

*They held the doctrines of PURE Methodism,* page 12. But really, if the system of methodism contains some doctrines charged upon the young men, it cannot be remarkable for its purity. It were, however, to be wished, that learned men would not utterly forget that old moral precept, which enjoins us *to do to others what we would on an exchange of circumstances wish them to do to us* : this precept once on a day gained the admiration of a Pagan emperor, notwithstanding it was given in that old book called the New Testament, so little known to some learned men, and so much despised by others. Had this rule of equity and candour been observed, our author would not have asserted, that the *Metboaists* held that *there is no necessity of good works.* However, it hath been  
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the way of the priests, from the beginning of the gospel, to misrepresent the faith and practice of those who differed from them. Did not I do well then to shew you the perfect harmony among the Babylonish, Jewish, Roman, and O——d clergy? and I fancy I shall have occasion to join to the list another very respectable fraternity, whose persons, parts, and principles are to be held in great estimation, and who hitherto have been without any mark of distinction conferred on them by the SHAVER.

I. They held, *that faith without works is sufficient to salvation*: so says our Vindicator, and asserts that *this is one of the doctrines of Methodism*. With men of letters and priestly reverence this bold assertion may pass for proof; nay, I know not how orthodox it may be held even in a C——n; but, amongst laymen and country women, the redundancy of whose learning has not quite destroyed their common sense, and whose attachment to the clergy has not as yet absorbed their regard to equity, it will require something like proof, before it is believed. And in behalf of laymen and old women, I would most humbly beg, that the learned Vindicator would *condescend* to give an instance or two in favour of this assertion; and in the mean while I assert, that *faith without works is sufficient to salvation* makes no part in the doctrine of Methodism; notwithstanding, from the *idleness* of many of the clergy, it appears to be the dependance of not a few gentlemen of the sacred order, who are well paid for believing, without attempting much work. Really it would not be amiss for the gentlemen parsons, who have been regularly educated in an orthodox way, and the Methodist



preachers who are said to be so erroneous, to come forth fairly to the light, and make a strict comparison of notes together, in point of industry in the work of the ministry, regularity in their conversation, benevolence of disposition, and works of mercy towards their fellow creatures; and as faith is best known by the fruits it produceth, let those be deemed the *Hereticks* and *Infidels* who have not those good works attending them, let them profess what faith they please.

To serve the present turn, like my brother authors, let me propose the following case to the consideration of my judicious readers, and many of them I am likely to have, to the no small mortification of somebody. There are a set of gentlemen, who are thought to know their Master's will, and are well paid for doing it; *but do it not*: and there are another set of men, who are very active and diligent in what they take to be their Master's will, but are thought in some cases to be mistaken: which of the two shall we think to be the best Christians, The lazy drone or the active servant? It is somewhat absurd to plead for good works, unless a man has got some to shew; for till once it appears that the clergy are laborious in the work of the ministry, we shall always find good works on the side of the Methodists; notwithstanding, in this present state of imperfection, we shall find them, like all other classes of people, attended with some defects.

But to attend to the point in question, Whether the Methodists in general hold that, *faith without works is sufficient to salvation*? If by salvation our Vindicator means *justification, pardon of sin, and acceptance with God*, the Methodists hold, and he is an Infidel who holds

not, that believers are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus, Rom. iii. 24. And that to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. And that the man is blessed unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, Rom. iv. 5, 6. On the account of such sayings the Methodists and every Christian believes, that justification dependeth not on works, but merely on grace; and if the Scriptures, on account of the disuse of them, are not thought sufficient to establish a point of such grand importance, we have the *Rule of Faith* subscribed and sworn to by every parson of the Church of England to keep us in countenance.

Art. XI. An article which looks excessively awkward upon the Vindicator's treatment of the Methodists, who hold that " Good works cannot precede justification, therefore can by no means be the cause of it, and that they are utterly unconcerned therein." The article is the very same, and therefore it is methodism, and the Vindicator is a Methodist for subscribing it; for it says, *We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour by faith, and not for our own works or deservings; wherefore, that we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort, as more largely is express'd in the homily of justification.* This doctrine is absolute Methodism, and yet it stands in the articles; and yet it is subscribed by all who have a benefice in view; and yet they are Hereticks and Schismatics who hold it, and must be expelled the university.

Learn hence, that if you hold it not, your subscribing of it brings you into the way of pre-

preferment ; but to hold what you subscribe is the very way to expulsion.

The *Bible*, the *Articles* and *Homilies* of the *Church of England*, and every Christian, holdeth, along with the Methodists, that justification is independant upon any works of the party justified ; but to say that the Methodists hold that good works are not necessary in the Christian life, is a low, mean, and pitiful slander, which neither the Vindicator nor his abettors are capable of proving. And though I have not the honour of wearing a gown, and consequently am no gentleman, I humbly beg that their reverences of the university would offer some proof to the Public, who want this assertion to be cleared up, the bare word of a priest being thought somewhat insufficient, having lost much of its weight within this last century. And till that is done, I shall be bold enough to whisper in the ear of my very good friend the Public, that if he wants to hear of a faith without works, or works without faith, or to have them so confounded that neither of them can be known, he must not go to the Lock Chapel, Black Friars, or the Tabernacle ; but must even attend on such of the doctors of the established church who never were suspected of Methodism, and there he'll have it just equal to his wish.

But the Methodists have no notion of preaching any faith but a living faith, productive of good works where-ever it is planted, as our Vindicator very well knows, if ever he read their many sermons and other pieces, which have so much attracted the attention of the world of late years, to the great concern of many a high clergyman. And that very faith,  
which



which they consider as justifying faith, they represent as the spring of all Christian holiness. And the very reason which they give for their looking upon many a well-paid parson as no more than a dignified Infidel, is because that the parson's faith does not work by love to God and the souls of men.

Do not, good gentlemen, I pray you now, talk about good works till ye discover more love to the souls of the people than to the *tythe of their crops*. Exercise yourselves more in good works, and all good men will have the better opinion of your faith. Discover, my worthy rectors, that you have some sense of humanity remaining in you by relieving your oppressed curates ; let them share in the income proportionably to the part they bear in the service of the church. This is a good and equitable work ; this is your duty to do, and what they have a right to expect.

Let not a gentleman who, as to learning, virtue, and good sense, is equal with yourself, stand hat-in-hand before you, as so much your inferior, seeing he lacks nothing but a patron to make him in all respects your equal. It is hard, gentlemen, very hard, that he should do all the drudgery of the trade, and receive little above the tenth of the profit. This is no good work. This argues little in favour of your faith. This cannot be equalled by the conduct of the most oppressive tradesman of the lay kind. Therefore, worthy gentlemen, pay the curates their proportion of the tythes and offerings. Convince the Public, reverend worthies, that you have some care about their souls eternal welfare, by endeavouring to instruct the lowest  
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of the people in the knowledge of God's word, if you think that fit to be known ; and if you have an unfavourable opinion of that, do teach them a little out of the Enchiridion, &c. &c. that people may have no cause to say they pay their pence for nothing. People will animadvert upon the carelessness of the parson, whilst the parishioners are never sought after but for their dues, the receiving of which is in many cases thought not to be among the good works which are any-way a-kin to a gospel faith. Look a little then into their spiritual estate as well as their temporal. Be willing to take a little pains as well as to receive full pay. Do the duties as well as receive the emoluments of the profession. For famishing the curate, and letting the people die for lack of knowledge, are works not very amiable.

When ye see any neighbouring ministers more conscientious, more laborious, and consequently more useful and better followed than yourselves, do not traduce them as Hereticks and Schismatics, for thereby you only trumpet forth your own infamy, and make yourselves the mock of conscientious lay people, who have no other view in religious duties than the interest of the Redeemer. Do not let people know the rottenness of your foundation, by imprudently discovering your fear for the church ; for every body knows, that knows the Bible, that no church can be in danger besides the church of Antichrist ; and all your priestly explosions from the pulpit, when you venture there, all your inveighing against your neighbours of a different persuasion, only tends to let us laymen into the secret ; namely, that you are not upon the true foundation. Pay a little more regard to the Sabbath

Sabbath than heretofore, worthy Sirs. Do not let the people have it to say, when they are reproved for Sabbath-breaking, "The parson does so, and so may we." Remember, ye are well paid for keeping up the form of religion, and there is another world beyond this, and there is another judge besides him in the B—p's court. A judge who will not venerate a man the more for his gown, and who very probably may be strict in his enquiries after what ye have done in return for your tythes and many fees. And I doubt you will find this judge to be more on the side of the poor than that of the clergy. Begin then a reformation of your parishes in your own families, and do not convince the people that religion is a farce, made use of only for the emolument of the priest, the mercenary principles of whom we country people account the very spring of *atheism*. Do not belie your neighbours, good gentlemen, as you usually do once at least in a year, not much to the honour of holy mother church; but even give the dissenters, and the very devil his due; and although ye dare not meddle with the latter, yet be propitious to the former; for they are asses upon which many of you have ridden to a fat benefice: the tamest asses that ever a clerical Balaam laid his leg over, and therefore ought not to be male-treated.

But where am I going, or what have I been writing? My zeal for the gownsmen has carried me away very far from the point under debate, for which I hope to have a few encomiums given me by my good friends the Critical Reviewers; to whom I beg my printer to present my compliments through the channel

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of his press, and my very grateful acknowledgments of the honours they have done me, in classing me with Thomas Brown, Esq; of facetious memory, and the worthy author of a certain *Spy*. An honour, I assure you, reader, which they do not confer upon every author they review, no, not even upon all the old standers in the literary canton.

F I N I S.

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